Sept. 4, 1962 H. B. LATINA 3,051,958

BASEBALL MITT OR GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

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FIG.1

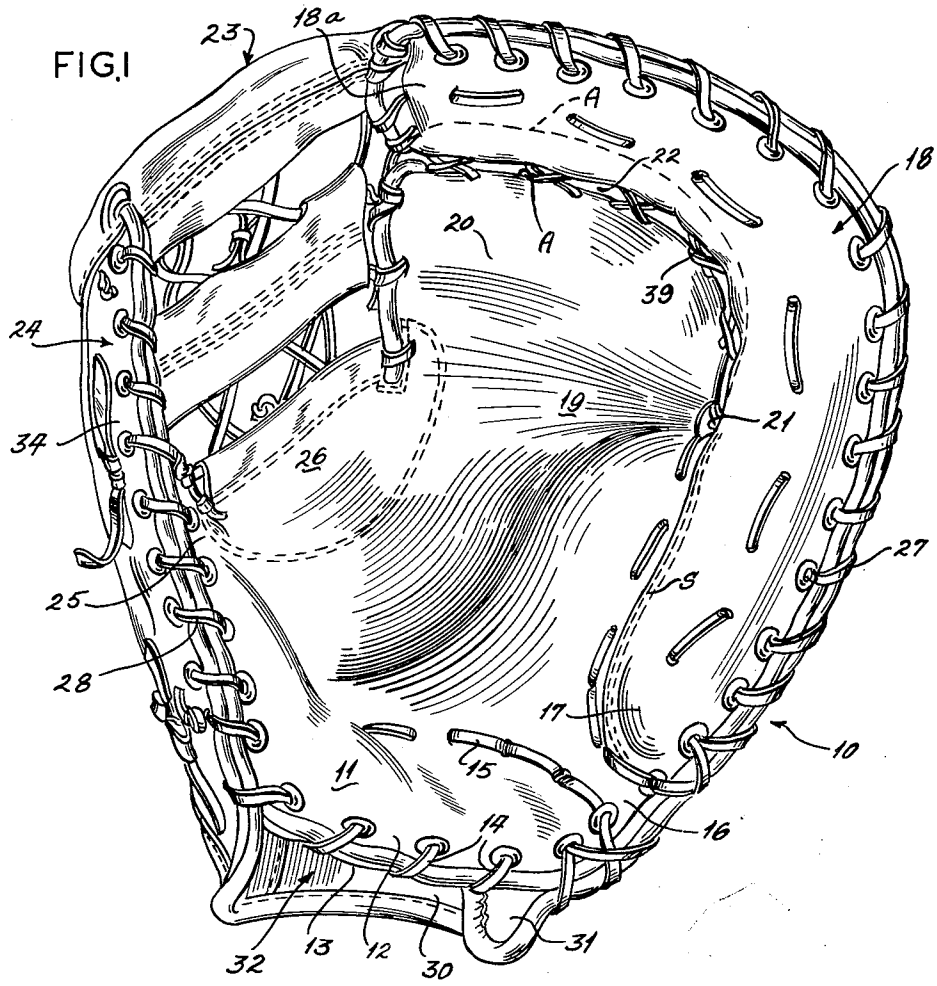
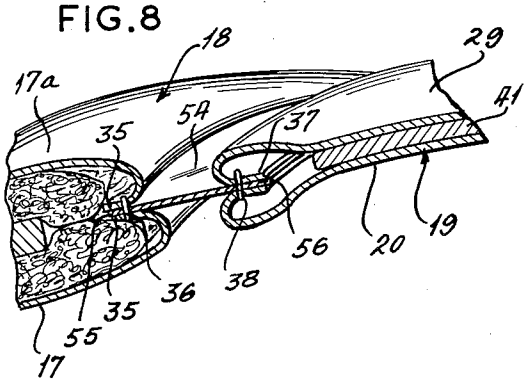


FIG.8



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BASEBALL MITT OR GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

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FIG. 2

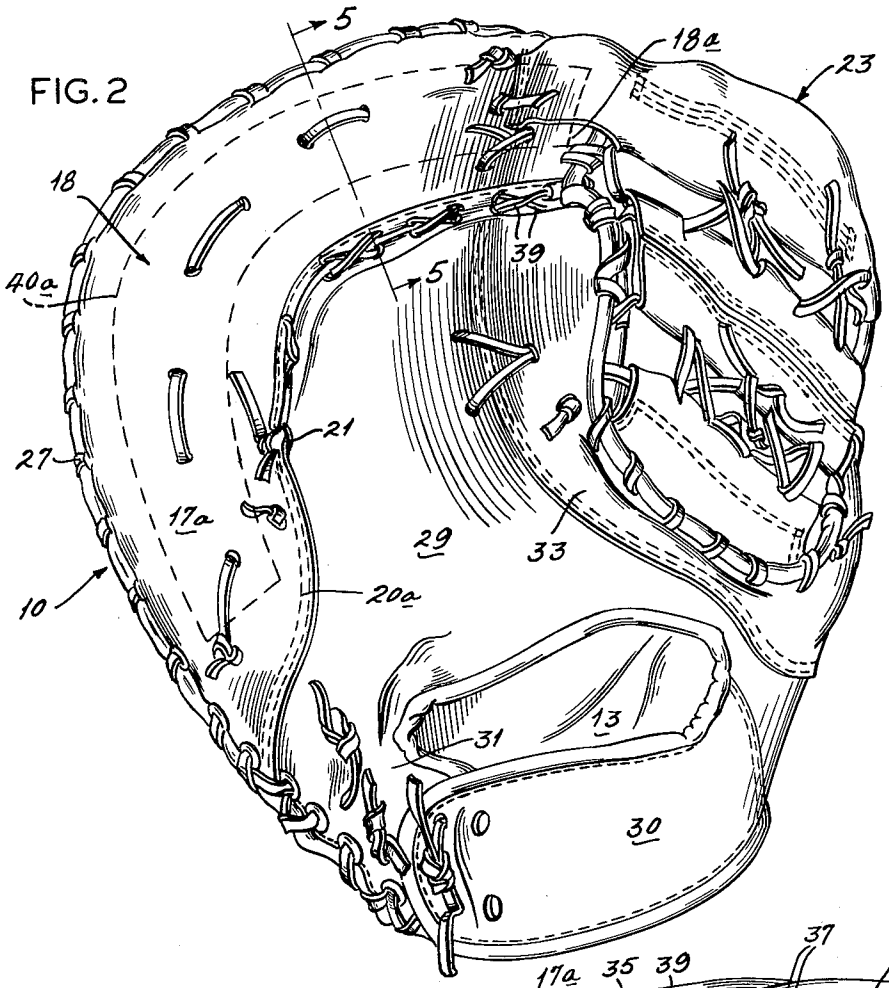
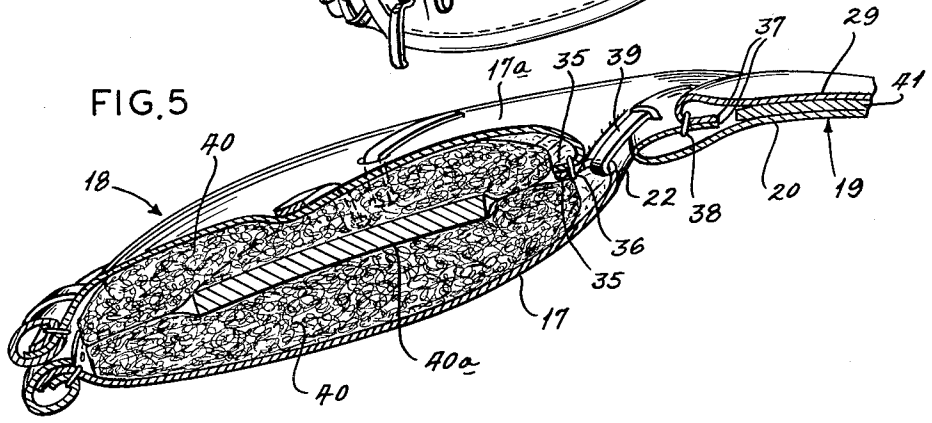


FIG. 5



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BASEBALL MITT OR GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

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FIG. 3

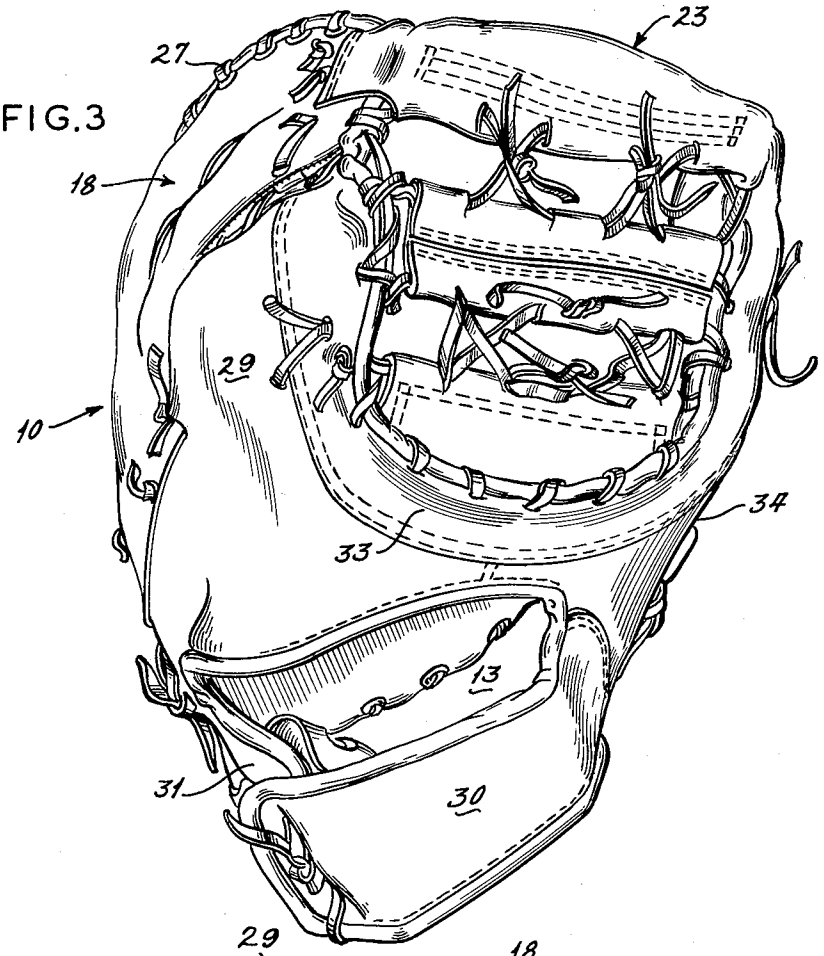
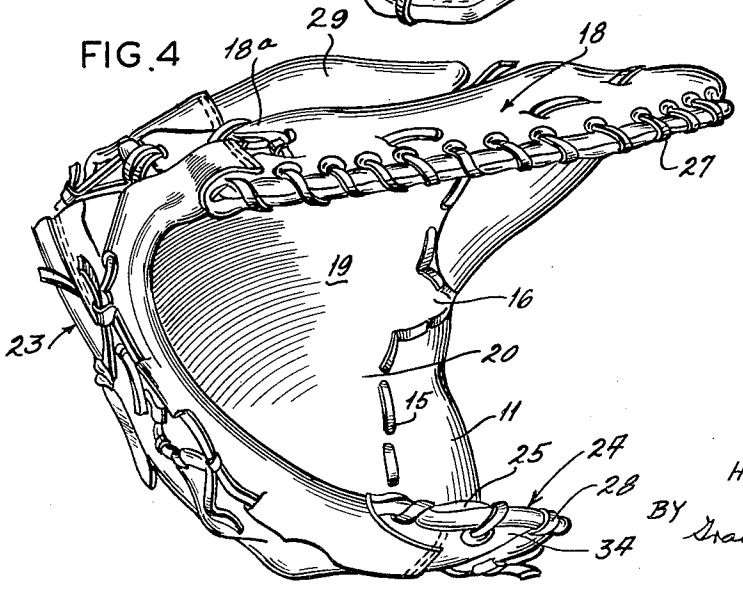


FIG. 4



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BASEBALL MITT OR GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

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FIG.6

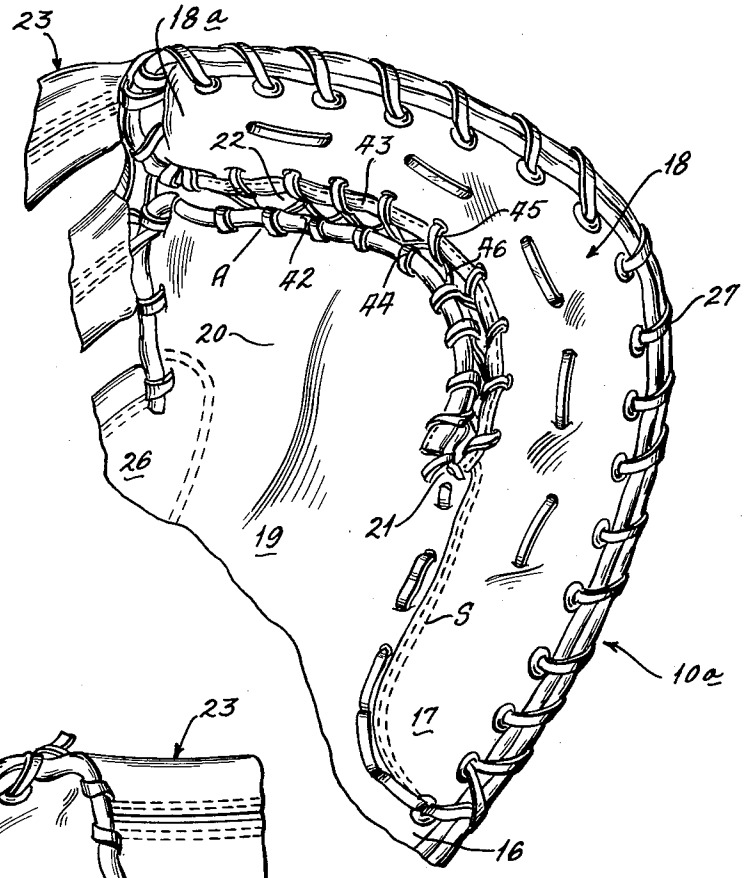


FIG.7

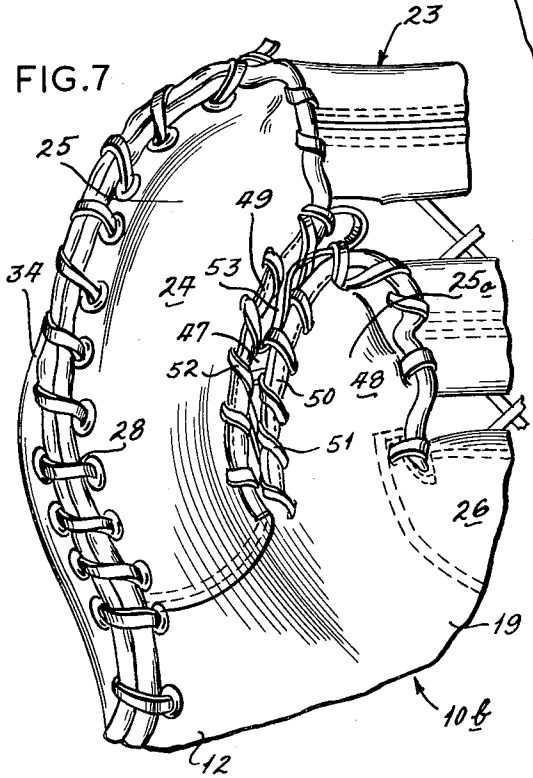
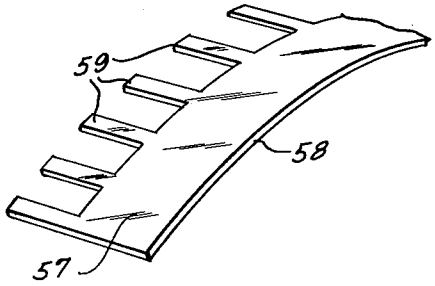


FIG.9



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BASEBALL MITT OR GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

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Filed Dec. 15, 1960, Ser. No. 76,008
7 Claims. (Cl. 2—19)

This invention relates to improvements in the construction of baseball mitts and gloves.

Heretofore, baseball gloves have usually embodied an arrangement of parts in which the pocket area is formed by a palm piece having padded finger extensions, a spaced padded thumb extension and a web or backstop section disposed in the space between the thumb and the adjacent-most finger extension. In the prevailing form of baseball mitt, the pocket area is created by building up the peripheral padding to form a pocket in the palm area, and by providing a cleft where the web or backstop of a conventional glove is disposed and closing the cleft by lacings. All these known constructions have the tendency to restrict the ball catching flexibility of the glove or mitt until a period of break-in has shaped the material and conformed the padding. These constructions also tend to place the player's fingers in a position where the ball impact is directly taken thereon unless a player purposely relies upon the backstop or web. Furthermore, the constructions heretofore prevailing become too limber and soft a short time after break-in.

An important object of this invention is to provide a unique construction for baseball gloves and mitts which will overcome the foregoing characteristics by permitting the same to attain a break-in condition almost immediately.

It is an object of this invention to provide an improved glove or mitt construction in which a relatively deep pocket is readily created during manufacture and means is formed to stiffen the peripheral portions of the pocket area so that the glove or mitt is prevented from collapsing and will be much more efficient for a longer time.

A further object of this invention is to provide a glove or mitt of improved construction in which a flexible and adjustable palm section is incorporated in a unique arrangement to cooperate with the usual backstop or web, whereby a ball catching pocket is formed having a deep shape set off by a relatively firm peripheral section which tends to hold the pocket throughout the life of the mitt or glove.

These and other objects will be more specifically set forth and described in connection with certain preferred forms of the invention, and it is the object hereof to include all component parts and details of improved construction disclosed in the accompanying drawings which illustrate the various characteristics to be described.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a front view in perspective of one form which this invention may have;

FIG. 2 is a rear perspective view of the mitt or glove shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a further perspective view of the mitt or glove of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is an end perspective view of the same;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged and fragmentary sectional detail of a palm securing means at line 5—5 in FIG. 2;

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary front perspective view of an alternate construction to that shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary front perspective view of another alternate construction to that shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary and enlarged sectional detail of an alternate means to that disclosed in FIG. 5; and

FIG. 9 is another alternate connecting means used as the means in either FIGS. 5 or 8.

In the form of the invention disclosed in the several views the construction is intended to be incorporated in baseball mitts or gloves so that the following description given with reference to baseball mitts is understood to include both types without limitation except such as may be required to distinguish from constructions heretofore known.

With reference to FIGS. 1 to 5, one form of the invention has been illustrated in which the body **10** is composed in its face or ball catching side (FIG. 1) of a padded heel section **11** having a facing ply **12** and a lining ply **13**, the juxtaposed bound edges of which are secured by a lacing **14**. The heel padding is retained by a lacing **15** which extends inwardly from one edge of the body and forms a hinge or fold strip **16** forming a demarcation between the heel **11** and the adjacent end of ply **17** which is part of a peripheral stiffening section **18**. The ply **12** of the heel **11** is integral with other portions which constitute a palm section **19** formed in the ply **20**. In FIG. 1 a margin of the palm ply **20** is connected to the ply **17** of section **18** by stitching S which extends along the inner margin of the ply **17** to the beginning end **21** of a gap or separation **22** between the palm section **19** and the stiffening section **18**. This separation of the sections **18** and **19** may also be achieved by a construction in which the whole area of the palm is integrated with the peripheral section and a cut is formed therein in substantially the location and direction of the separation **22** so that the more central area of the palm is movable relative to the outer peripheral portion and can adapt itself to a shape or form providing a deep ball catching pocket adjacent a web-like backstop **23**. Accordingly, the outer extremity A of the palm section **19** is separated from the section **18** from the beginning **21** to the outer end **18***a* of the stiffening section **18**. In addition, heel ply **12** is integral with a thumb section **24** formed by ply **25** which is spaced from the end **18***a* of section **18** to receive the backstop assembly **23** adjacent a crotch area **26**. The palm lining ply **13** is coextensive with the palm section **19** and the thumb section **24** so that the marginal lacing **27** at the section **18** and the lacing **28** at the thumb section secure the lining ply in desired position.

As seen in FIGS. 2 and 3, the rear side of body **10** is constructed with a ply **29** at the rear of the palm section **19**, and has a wrist strap **30** secured thereto at one side and a wrist strap attaching piece **31** at the opposite side to form a hand receiving opening **32** (FIG. 1). The rear ply **17***a* of the stiffening section **18** is connected to a portion of the rear ply **29** by stitching S up to the beginning **21** of the separation between the palm section **19** and the stiffening section **18** (see FIG. 1). The back of the crotch **26** is reinforced by a separate ply **33** which extends upwardly toward the outer end **18***a* of the stiffening section **18** and also upwardly along the thumb section **24** to provide greater strength for the several lacings which secure the backstop assembly **23** in position. It is believed unnecessary to give a detailed explanation of the lacing arrangement since the several views in the drawings furnish a clear disclosure of this portion of the construction. The marginal lacings **27** and **28**, heretofore pointed out in FIG. 1, serve to secure the back plies of the body **10** to the face plies, and this includes the ply **34** forming the back of the thumb.

In constructing the stiffening section **18** of the body **10**, the plies **17** and **17***a* have inturned margins **35** (FIG. 5) which are sewn or blind stitched together at **36** to form one margin of the separation or demarcation **22** with the plies **20** and **29** of the palm section **19**. Sim-

ilarly the plies 20 and 29 have inturned margins 37 held by blind stitching 38. These stitched margins 35 and 37 extend from the outer end 18*a* of the stiffening section 18, and the extremity A of the palm section 19, to the beginning 21 where the plies are then suitably connected by the external lapped seams secured by exposed stitching S at the face and at the back. The separated margins defined by the blind stitching 36 and 38 are suitably flexibly interconnected by lacing means 39.

A unique and great advantage of the construction of the body shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, is that the palm plies 20 and 29 may be made longer in the initial cutting of the plies so that when assembled the palm section 19 extends beyond the section 18 and must be drawn inwardly from the broken line position of the extremity A in FIG. 1 to form a preshaped pocket (FIG. 4) which causes the body to assume and hold a shaped form. This shaping may be varied as desired by either drawing the lacings 39 up snugly or having them rather loose so that the palm section 19 has some degree of movement or play relative to the peripheral section 18 which surrounds the palm on at least one side and the extremity A. The stiffening section 18 is provided with suitable layers of padding 40 in which a stiffening element 40*a* is placed. The palm may have padding in the form of an auxiliary ply 41 secured to the palm ply 20 since the player's fingers will be disposed in the mitt away from the pocket area generally located adjacent the crotch 26.

Turning now to FIG. 6, a fragmentary portion of a mitt 10*a* has been shown to illustrate a variant of the construction disclosed in FIGS. 1 and 2. It is, of course, understood that other parts of this mitt are essentially like those previously described and similar numerals of reference will be used except where differences are made to appear. The variant construction differs in the respects that the blind stitching 36 and 38 of FIG. 5 is eliminated and the margins along the separation or demarcation space 22 from the beginning point 21 around to the end 18*a* of the stiffening section 18 are provided with edge bindings 42 on the palm plies 20 and 29 and bindings 43 on the plies 17 and 17*a* of the stiffening section 18. The bound margins are secured by lacing means 44 and 45, respectively, and an interconnecting lacing means 46 is applied between the lacing means 44 and 45 to flexibly join the margins thus formed. Since the palm plies 20 and 29 are initially longer (FIG. 1) so as to have the extremity A initially lap or extend beyond the stiffening section 18, it follows that in bringing the palm section 19 within the limits of the stiffening section 18 a certain degree of curvature is enforced which results in imparting a deep preshaped pocket form to the body, as seen in FIG. 4.

A further variant of the construction herein preferred and as seen in FIG. 1 or FIG. 6, is illustrated in the body 10*b* of FIG. 7. It is understood that other portions of the body 10*b* may be constructed in the manner described in FIGS. 1, 2 or 6, and like parts will be indicated by like reference numerals wherever possible. This variant provides a greater degree of pocket preshaping by having a portion 25*a* of the thumb ply 25 separated along the demarcation 47 to form an auxiliary thumb section 48. The separated margins of the thumb plies 25 and 25*a* and the correspondingly separated rear plies are bound by the binding tapes 49, and the ply 25*a* of the section 48 is similarly marginally bound at 50. Lacing means 51 secure the margins 50 of section 48 and other lacing means 52 secure the margins 49. These lacing means 51 and 52 supply the anchorage for a further interconnecting flexible lacing means 53, the latter lacing means retaining the section 48 in position.

It is to be understood that the variant shown in FIG. 7 may be applied to the mitt of FIG. 1 or it may be applied to a mitt which includes the variant shown in FIG. 6. It is, therefore, believed unnecessary to separately illustrate mitts which include the subject matter of either FIGS. 6 or 7 since the construction is amply set forth in the showings herein given.

In FIG. 8 there is illustrated an alternate form of means flexibly connecting the palm plies 20 and 29 of body 10 to the plies 17 and 17*a* of the stiffening section 18. The flexible connecting means herein consists in an elongated tape-like section of material 54 having its margin 55 secured to the margins 35 by the blind stitching 36 previously described in FIG. 5, and having the opposite margin 56 secured to the margins 37 by the blind stitching 38. The construction shown is stronger than that of FIG. 5 or 6, however, it yields a flexible connection in the use of the mitt. Still another form of flexible connecting means is shown in FIG. 9 wherein the tape-like section 57 has a continuous margin 58 which may be secured in either the blind stitching 36 or 38 of FIG. 8. The opposite margin is formed with tangs 59 spaced apart and adapted to be secured by the blind stitching 36 or 38 of FIG. 8, whichever is not used to secure the margin 58.

The foregoing description has set forth a preferred construction for a baseball mitt or glove and certain variants in the details of making the same, all of which may be found useful in the sugested combinations to produce the desired results sought by this invention. It should now be appreciated that there has been disclosed a unique improvement in which the mitt or glove body is given a preshaped form and a deep ball catching pocket which does not require a period of break-in and locates the pocket in the palm section A and not at the backstop as heretofore found in prior constructions. A significant feature of the present construction is the provision of a shaped palm section which is flexibly connected to a peripheral stiffening section, and the provision of an arrangement of parts which permits the adoption of a stiffening section to frame marginal portions of the palm section and pocket so that the mitt is prevented from becoming misshaped due to balls hitting off-center of the pocket. The improved construction also embodies means to adjust the ball pocket shape by altering the palm section connection with the stiffening section and by adjusting the latter relative to the backstop. It also provides means for obtaining better control of the mitt on the hand since the ball is now caught more nearly in the palm and less in the backstop, and the palm section is marginally supported by the stiffening section.

While certain modifications will come to mind after understanding the foregoing description, it is intended that all modifications and equivalent constructions are to be included, so far as permitted by the prior art and the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. In a baseball catching article, a body including spaced thumb and palm sections and a heel section connected to said thumb and palm sections, said palm section having flexible facing and backing plies and being formed with an outer extremity generally opposite said heel section and defined by connecting said facing and backing plies, and said body further including a relatively stiff elongated section adapted to support the margins of said palm section from adjacent said heel section to said outer extremity and being initially unconnected to at least said outer extremity, said last section having facing and backing plies which are connected respectively to said palm section facing and backing plies for a portion of the length thereof adjacent said heel section, and said elongated section facing and backing plies being connected to each other along the length thereof adjacent said palm section outer extremity, and flexible means interconnecting said palm section outer extremity and the adjacent elongated section, said flexible means retaining said outer extremity of said palm section within said elongated section in a cupped ball receiving pocket.

2. The baseball catching article of claim 1 in which a

backstop is connected to said thumb and palm section in the space therebetween, and said elongated section has an outer end portion spaced from said heel section connected to said backstop.

3. In a baseball mitt or glove, a body comprising an elongated palm section having an outer terminal margin, a heel section opposite said terminal margin, said heel section and terminal margin extending generally transversely of said palm section, a thumb section on said body at one side of said palm section, a stiffening section on said body extending lengthwise of said palm section opposite said thumb section, said stiffening section having an end portion angularly directed along said terminal margin of said palm section and being initially unconnected thereto, and means connecting said terminal margin and said angular end portion to retain said palm section in a cupped ball receiving pocket.

4. In a baseball mitt or glove, a body comprising an elongated palm section having an outer terminal margin, a heel section opposite said terminal margin, said heel section and terminal margin extending generally transversely of said palm section, a thumb section on said body at one side of said palm section, means connecting said last mentioned side of said palm section and said thumb section to support said palm section, a stiffening section on said body extending lengthwise of said palm section opposite said thumb section, said stiffening section having an end portion angularly directed along said terminal margin of said palm section and being initially unconnected thereto, other means connecting said terminal margin and said angular end portion to retain said palm section in a cupped ball receiving pocket, and a connection from said end portion of said stiffening section to said first mentioned connecting means.

5. The baseball mitt or glove as set forth in claim 4 wherein said palm section outer terminal margin initially extends beyond said angular end portion of said stiffening section, said connecting means serving to retain said outer terminal margin of said palm section inwardly of said angular end portion whereby said palm section is cupped into a ball receiving pocket.

6. In a baseball mitt or glove, a body comprising an elongated palm section having an outer margin, a heel section opposite said outer margin, a thumb section on said body extending outwardly from said heel section and being spaced from said palm section outer margin, backstop means in the latter space connected to said thumb and palm sections, and a stiffening section on the body extending along said palm section opposite said thumb section, said stiffening section having an outer end portion angularly formed and extending initially unconnectedly adjacent said outer margin of said palm section, the angular portion of said stiffening section being connected to said outer margin whereby said palm section obtains support from said stiffening section and is retained in a ball catching cupped pocket adjacent said backstop means.

7. In a baseball mitt or glove, a body comprising an elongated palm section having a heel section and a spaced outer margin, said heel section and outer margin extending generally transversely of the length of said palm section, a thumb section on said body extending angularly outwardly from said heel section and being spaced from said palm section outer margin, backstop means in the latter space connected to said thumb and palm sections, and a palm section supporting and stiffening means on the body extending along said palm section opposite said thumb section, said supporting and stiffening section having an outer end portion angularly formed and extending initially unconnectedly adjacent said outer margin of said palm section, the angular portion at least of said supporting and stiffening section being connected to said outer margin whereby said palm section obtains support and is retained in a ball catching cupped pocket adjacent said backstop means.

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